

Department of Environmental Quality tests various sites for PFAS

BISMARCK, N.D. – The North Dakota Department of Environmental Quality (NDDEQ) sampled 55 drinking water treatment plants for Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) in October 2020 and recently completed that report. Although PFAS was detected in three systems, only one sample had a concentration high enough to be measurable, and none of the three detections were at a health advisory level.

This survey was a follow-up to a 2018 baseline study in which environmental scientists sampled various sites where PFAS would potentially be present such as landfills, drinking water treatment plants, wastewater treatment plants, and fire training areas.

PFAS are synthetic chemicals used in a wide range of products because of their ability to repel water, grease, and oil. Certain foams used to extinguish fires involving flammable liquids also contain PFAS. In addition, they are found in various building materials, carpet treatments, non-stick cookware, and other consumer products. According to the [National Institutes of Health](#), there are over 4,700 types of PFAS compounds in existence.

PFAS, also called “forever chemicals” because they do not fully degrade in nature, have the potential to contaminate soil, groundwater, surface water, and drinking water. Exposure to high levels of PFAS compounds may lead to negative human health effects, including developmental effects to fetuses during pregnancy, immune system problems, changes to cholesterol levels, and cancer.

Learn more about PFAS at https://deq.nd.gov/Publications/MF/PFAS_factsheet.pdf.

The 2018 Statewide PFAS Study and the 2020 Statewide PFAS Study are both available online at <https://deq.nd.gov/MF/>.

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